

ASSEMBLY, No. 3148

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 7, 2022

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman JOHN F. MCKEON

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes NJ Water Data Center at public institution of higher education; appropriates \$1 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT establishing the New Jersey Water Data Center,
2 supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes, and making
3 an appropriation.
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:
7

8 1. a. The New Jersey Water Data Center is hereby established
9 at a public institution of higher education in the State. The purpose
10 of the center shall be to collect, analyze, and publish data on the
11 provision of drinking water and the collection and management of
12 wastewater and stormwater in the State, in order to establish
13 benchmarking data for utilities, provide information on State-wide
14 trends for State regulators and researchers, and promote connections
15 between residents and their water systems. Within 30 days after the
16 effective date of this act, the Governor shall designate the
17 institution of higher education at which the center shall operate.

18 b. The director of the center shall develop, publish, and
19 maintain an Internet website that allows persons to easily access
20 data on drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater systems. The
21 data shall be updated at least annually and shall include, but not be
22 limited to, the following:

23 (1) performance indicators for each system, including, for
24 drinking water systems, whether each system meets the State's
25 primary and secondary drinking water standards, whether the
26 system has exceeded the federal action level for lead or copper, the
27 estimated number of lead service lines in the system; and the
28 number of lead service lines replaced by each drinking water
29 system;

30 (2) the estimated amount of drinking water lost due to leaks by
31 each drinking water system in the State;

32 (3) budgetary information for each drinking water, wastewater,
33 and stormwater system, including operating expenditures, capital
34 expenditures, operating budget, capital budget, operating ratio, and
35 the percentage of expenditures spent on infrastructure upgrades and
36 maintenance;

37 (4) affordability information for each system, including the
38 average annual cost, per residential household as a percentage of the
39 average income in the service area, for drinking water, sewer, or
40 stormwater management charges, as appropriate;

41 (5) for combined sewer systems, information about combined
42 sewer overflow events in the system, including the number of
43 events and the amount of wastewater and stormwater discharged by
44 combined sewer outfalls in the system; and

45 (6) an assessment of the transparency measures undertaken by
46 each system, including, but not limited to, the posting of rates and
47 the members of the system's governing body on the system's
48 Internet website.

c. The director of the center shall convene an advisory council to assist the center in fulfilling its purpose. The council shall be structured and empowered as deemed fit by the director, except that it shall include at least one representative from each of the Department of Environmental Protection, the Board of Public Utilities, and the Department of Community Affairs.

d. No later than two years after the effective date of this section, the director shall submit a report to the Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), summarizing the center's activities and identifying priorities for the next five years, including any additional resource needs.

2. There is appropriated \$1 million from the General Fund to the public institution of higher education designated by the Governor pursuant to section 1 of this act, in order to implement the provisions of this act.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill would establish the New Jersey Water Data Center at a public institution of higher education in the State. The purpose of the center would be to collect, analyze, and publish data on the provision of drinking water and the collection and management of wastewater and stormwater in the State, in order to establish benchmarking data for utilities, provide information on State-wide trends for State regulators and researchers, and promote connections between residents and their water systems. The bill would require the Governor, within 30 days after the bill's effective date, to designate the institution of higher education at which the data center will be housed.

The bill would require certain basic data to be provided by the center, as enumerated in subsection b. of section 1 of the bill. The bill would also require the director of the center to establish an advisory council to oversee the center's operation, which would be required to include at least one representative from the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Community Affairs, and the Board of Public Utilities. The bill would appropriate \$1 million from the General Fund in order to temporarily fund the center.